



Early Learning Programs & Workforce Sub-Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes – October 16, 2018

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

DTCC, Terry Campus, Dover

Attendance: Julie Johnson, Owner of Tender Loving Kare IV; Pam Weir, Birth to Three Program; Sue Campbell, Birth to Three Program; Caitlin Gleason, Office of Early Learning; Mary Randall, Read Aloud Delaware; Andrea Prettyman, Children & Families First; Dawn Alexander, Colonial School District; Trisha Moses, Boys and Girls Clubs of Delaware; Kim Pridemore, Del Technical Community College; Cheryl Clendaniel, The Learning Center; Jamie Schneider, Education Enrichment Center; Veronica Commodore, DIEEC; Lynn Jezyk, ECE Advocate; John Fisher-Klein, Office of Early Learning; Debbie Taylor, Office of Early Learning; Michelle Spencer, De Association for the Education of Young Children; Audrey Carey, Indian River School District

Julie Johnson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order and everyone introduced themselves.

Discussion involved having the meeting members focus on 3 priorities that impact our workforce crisis – collaboration, plans opportunities, and how can we support. It was noted that an example of this is that we learned about what the Delaware Teacher Academy is doing, expectations for outcomes, sharing information about licensing and Delaware Stars.

In terms of supporting our workforce, we look to CTE Pathway, which we can support with the correct information and discussion about what is in the curriculum. We also look at higher education programs. We must ask, “Are teachers trained when they leave this program? As for ongoing professional development, it needs to be relevant to the staff needs across the state.

We must look at the opportunities before us. We need to think about where students are doing their internships. We need partnerships with contracts for students to get the hours that they need so that they will meet the qualification of intern vs. lead teacher.

Another great idea is career tech programs that hold expos. Maybe we could do something for early childhood to generate motivation and provide information. Possible expo days could be the Making a Difference Conference and Advocacy Day.

It was asked, “How do we cultivate the CDA as the industry standard?” Traditional schools have not figured out how to get the 480 hours for the CDA so that when they graduate they also have their CDA.

We need a marketing brochure which describes what other pathways are available once they get their degree.

We are thinking about barriers and coming up with suggestions to address those barriers, all while making sure early childhood becomes a priority for our higher eds. Barriers include: access to the methods coursework. When they get into the methods class, they have to go part time. What is the solution? Having a student do a practicum perhaps. The benefits to having teachers go to a different placement because then they can see quality, however often they are going into public schools.

Who does the placements for community colleges? How can we partner with them to think about placements differently? Thinking about swapping teachers between Star 5 centers so that they can get their practicum hours? There would be a barrier with licensing, fingerprinting, etc. How are we thinking about mentoring and coaching? Centers are so strapped for people, they can't do training because they need to come in and teach immediately. People coming in with a degree in something other than education should be considered teachers as long as they are taking other coursework. We should consider that online coursework needs to be more of an option. At the same time, we want people to get out and experience time with children.

Suggested that we need a visual with different tracks of how they can advance their career. (i.e., each of the college requirements and what the different pathways are.) Is this where we should start as a committee?

Next steps: We will meet with higher education partners to brainstorm barriers together and identify solutions that can be thought through together for the committee to make as recommendations statewide. We could also meet with high school students.

Michelle Spencer shared an update on the Apprenticeship program being revived.

Questions were raised on getting professional development quality assured: trauma-informed training from Children and Families First.

POC update from Julie about looking at POC policies and learning the information. Duplicated mailings have been stopped, which has resulted in a cost savings to the government. This was a suggestion made by Dawn to the GEAR. Julie has a meeting with POC on 10/16, where she will discuss bringing information to parents on the front end. Julie notes that this was specifically for eligibility for children with special needs. POC pays a different rate for those who are eligible. She will also be reporting in the future on the fees that currently are not permitted to be charged to POC families.

While priorities were narrowed, but governance structure and data is still top of mind. Members can join the data and policy subcommittee to discuss this. We need the data to help influence legislators and also higher education institutions. We need workforce data – how should we collect our data questions, and who can we make this request to? It was suggested that we need to create a script for teachers and families who will be going to Legislative Hall. They need to be going before session because then we are not competing with everyone else. We have a unique opportunity because 1/3 of legislators are new. At the beginning of December we will know who is on what committee and we can then focus our message on those who are on the Education Committee.

We know that the more success that children have early on the more success they will have in school. The group had a discussion of the benefits cliff and asked how we can incentivize centers and family child care to accept POC. Please note that as members advocate for families, know that there are multiple initiatives being funded by CCDF (TEACH, POC).

It was noted that the next meeting will be December 11th, location to be determined. The meeting was adjourned.